

APPEARED  
R.I.

WASHINGTON POST  
13 November 1986

ART BUCHWALD

## The Long Good Buy: Soviet Secrets for Sale

I live around the corner from the Soviet Embassy in Washington. The other morning I saw a crowd in front of it and asked an FBI man dressed as a parking meter maid what was going on.

"It's a garage sale being held by the Russians who were booted out of the United States. You can get some great buys on Afghan wool potholders and Andropov ashtrays with secret tape recorders inside."

I wandered over to one of the bridge tables. The Soviet Embassy employee said to me, "Can I interest you in Navy submarine codes that have only been used once? They come in this beautiful Statue of Liberty key ring and can easily be hidden in a pumpkin."

"No, thank you," I said. "I stopped collecting submarine codes after Admiral Rickover died."

"Then perhaps I could whet your appetite with stolen blueprints of the Stealth bomber. They make extremely colorful wall decorations."

I said, "I wouldn't know one stolen blueprint from the other. How can I be sure they're genuine?"

"Each and every one of them has been authenticated by Cap Weinberger. We Soviets do not deal in phony American blueprints. That's why we're being kicked out of your country."

I told him I would be back. The next table featured microfilm of Reagan's "Star Wars" plan.

A Soviet Embassy woman manning the stand was selling microfilm that she had taken when she walked through the White House with a little baby under her arm. "All I had to do was say the baby was a Right to Life poster child and they let me photograph everything in the Oval Office."

"Are you an expert on microfilm?" I asked her.

"No, but I know what I like."

"Why are you selling them rather than taking them back to the Soviet Union?"

She replied, "If you are an American you get a fortune from Moscow for 'Star Wars' material. If you are a Russian they tell you it's your duty to turn it over to the motherland for free. This is my last chance in America to make a buck."

I wandered over to another table and saw a framed silver photo.

"Is that who I think it is?" I asked.

The Russian Embassy man smiled. "This is a genuine autographed photo of the American spy John Walker. It is dedicated to me and says, 'Tovarich, I couldn't have done it without you.'"

"That is a very sentimental memento. Why are you unloading it at a garage sale?"

"I have hundreds of them. John gave me a picture every time he committed an act of treason. The only one I won't sell is this picture of John selling out his son to the FBI. It was taken from a bakery van by one of our best KGB photographers at f4 and 1/100th of a second."

"What is this book here?"

"It's the Bible Vitaly Yurchenko swore on when he promised William Casey that he would always be a loyal defector."

"How did you get hold of it?"

"I got it from Vitaly just before he boarded the plane for Moscow. He asked me to give it to Casey for sentimental reasons. When I tried to deliver the Good Book, Casey turned it down and said he didn't want a Bible that had been sworn on by a defector who couldn't keep his word."

"Is there anything else in the garage sale I might be interested in?"

"I have the White House text of what Ronald Reagan said to Gorbachev in Iceland."

"Which one?"

"What version do you want?"

© 1986, Los Angeles Times Syndicate